

Proc. 8765

Title 3—The President

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand eleven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8765 of December 8, 2011

Human Rights Day and Human Rights Week, 2011

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

With the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948, the United Nations General Assembly affirmed the eternal truths that all people have the right to liberty, equality, and justice under the law. On Human Rights Day and during Human Rights Week, we celebrate our fundamental freedoms and renew our commitment to upholding and advancing human dignity.

The human race reflects a myriad of vibrant cultures and unique identities, yet we are united by the innate liberties that are our common birthright. The rights to assemble peacefully, to speak and worship as we please, and to determine our own destinies know no borders. All people should live free from the threat of extrajudicial killing, torture, oppression, and discrimination, regardless of gender, race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability.

Dictators seek to constrain these liberties through repressive laws and blunt force, but hope cannot be imprisoned and aspirations cannot be killed. We are reminded of this when demonstrators brave bullets and batons to sound the call for reform, when young women dare to go to school despite prohibitions, and when same-sex couples refuse to be told whom to love. The past year saw extraordinary change in the Middle East and North Africa as square by square, town by town, country by country, people rose up to demand their human rights. Around the world, we witnessed significant progress in consolidating democracy and expanding freedoms, often facilitated by critical assistance from the international community.

In the 63 years since the global community came together in support of human dignity and adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, our futures have grown increasingly interconnected. We have a stake not only in the stability of nations, but also in the welfare of individuals. On this anniversary, we recognize human rights as universal, and we stand with all those who reach for the dream of a free, just, and equal world.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim December 10, 2011, as Human Rights Day and the week beginning December 10, 2011, as Human Rights Week. I call upon the people of the United States to mark these observances with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand eleven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8766 of December 8, 2011

Bill of Rights Day, 2011

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

On December 15, 1791, the United States adopted the Bill of Rights, enshrining in our Constitution the protection of our inalienable freedoms, from the right to speak our minds and worship as we please to the guarantee of equal justice under the law. For 220 years, these fundamental liberties have shaped our national character and stirred the souls of all who dream of a freer, more just world. As we mark this milestone, we renew our commitment to preserving our universal rights and perfecting our Union.

Introduced in the First Congress in 1789, the Bill of Rights was born out of compromise. The promise of enumerated rights enabled the ratification of the Constitution without fear that a more centralized government would encroach on American freedoms. In adopting the first ten Amendments, our Founders put forth an ideal that continues to define our Nation—that we can have both liberty and security, that we need not sacrifice the rights of man for the rule of law.

Throughout our country's history, generations have risen to uphold the principles outlined in our Bill of Rights and advance equality for all Americans. The liberties we enjoy today are possible only because of these brave patriots, from the service members who have defended our freedom to the citizens who have braved billy clubs and fire hoses in the hope of extending America's promise across lines of color and creed. On Bill of Rights Day, we celebrate this proud legacy and resolve to pass to our children an America worthy of our Founders' vision.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim December 15, 2011, as Bill of Rights Day. I call upon the people of the United States to mark this observance with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand eleven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

BARACK OBAMA